

*Testimony Submitted to the Human Services Committee:*

H.B. No. 6909: An Act Establishing the Connecticut Traumatic Brain Injury Advisory Board

Senator Moore, Representative Abercrombie, Senator Markley, Representative Wood and members of the Human Services Committee

Good morning, my name is Jamie Arber. I am The Director of Operations for Mindscape Industries, which is a private social service agency that provides a range of community based support services to Connecticut's TBI Population.

I would like to express my gratitude to Senator Moore, Representative Abercrombie, Senator Markley, Representative Wood and members of the Human Services Committee for the opportunity to talk to you today about House Bill 6909.

In terms of why Bill 6909 should be established, I feel it vitally important for you to be aware that currently Connecticut lacks any organizations that are truly representative of the state's TBI community as a whole.

Therefore, your support in the establishment of Bill 6909 would enable the founding of an Advisory Board which truly represents people with TBI residing in Connecticut. The Board would be comprised of survivors, their families and key stakeholders from state and private service agencies. The members of this Board are Subject Matter Experts in their fields, and collectively would be capable of providing this ever increasing population - and all those impacted by what is referred to as the "silent epidemic" - with a true voice.

The establishment of Bill 6909 would enable our voices to be heard and have local input within vitally important areas such as: prevention awareness and community education concerning TBI, the improvement of services for TBI survivors, the development of recommendations to enhance the quality of life for TBI survivors and the establishment of outcome based data tracking systems focused on the prevalence of TBI in Connecticut.

As a survivor myself, I cannot understate the importance that Bill 6909 will have to the thousands of individuals impacted by TBI in Connecticut each year. With your support in the establishment of Bill 6909, and for the first time in Connecticut's history, there will be an organization capable of providing concise, consistent, clear, and substantiated information and advice related to TBI while establishing measures towards its prevention.

Based on my testimony today, I would sincerely urge each and every one of you to support Bill 6909.

Thank you for your time.